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SUBJECT: CNDP pique at leaked MONUC report continues to block Goma process

¶11. (SBU) Summary. CNDP continues to complain about the leaked MONUC report into a January massacre at Kilonge. It called again February 27 for outside investigation into the incident. CNDP opted out of a February 28 meeting called by MONUC to discuss CNDP-PARECO ceasefire violations, leaving PARECO to insist that it was not responsible for the violations. PARECO complained that the government was doing nothing, and questioned MONUC's impartiality. The government's chief representative, Vice Admiral Etumba, proposed two MONUC deployments between FARDC and CNDP forces, an idea that MONUC is reluctant to endorse. CNDP finally agreed to meet non-MONUC international facilitators March 1. High-level meetings with Nkunda may help resolve the CNDP impasse, but Etumba appears increasingly out of his depth. End Summary.

MONUC report remains sore point for CNDP

¶12. (SBU) CNDP released a letter February 27 complaining about lack of action by international facilitators in the week following leak of a draft report of a MONUC investigation alleging CNDP responsibility for a January massacre at Kilonge (reftel). The letter called for the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch and the Amani Forum to investigate the incident. It reiterated that the "damaging allegations" made by MONUC "demonstrated a lack of impartiality that was incompatible" with its role. MONUC-Goma Head of Office Alpha Sow and human rights section chief Jairo Sanchez have made plans to travel to Kilolirwe to share a final copy of the report with Nkunda.

¶13. (SBU) CNDP continues to boycott Goma process meetings involving MONUC. Its representatives, pleading "logistical problems," stayed away from a February 28 meeting called by MONUC to lay out procedures MONUC intends to use to investigate ceasefire violations.

CNDP had made a string of demands in the run-up to the meeting seemingly aimed at adding the report to the agenda, but finally opted out on grounds of "logistics."

Investigating ceasefire violations

¶14. (SBU) PARECO was the only belligerent represented at the meeting on CNDP-PARECO ceasefire violations. MONUC Eastern Division Commander General Bikram Singh set out seven categories of violations MONUC would investigate: hostilities, violent acts, military movements, new recruitment, attacks/sabotage/provocation, new military positions and movement of military personnel or equipment. He noted that half of the 40 ceasefire allegations since

January 23 involved CNDP and PARECO. He provided specifics on each alleged violation: many were lodged by PARECO, some came from local chiefs or authorities, and some from MONUC personnel. The majority involved cattle thefts or attempts by CNDP and PARECO to occupy the same villages.

15. (SBU) The PARECO president initially attempted to list new allegations, then agreed to address those which MONUC had documented. PARECO basically denied wrongdoing, insisting in each instance they had "never attacked ... but were only defending" themselves. They expressed growing frustration with the slow pace of implementation and called on international facilitators to press the government to take action. They proposed that MONUC deploy additional troops, although also questioned MONUC's neutrality. They stated, "if the accord is no longer valid, tell us and we will bring you Nkunda."

Etumba proposes new MONUC deployments

16. (SBU) Singh met FARDC Vice Admiral Didier Etumba and a large military delegation later the same day. Etumba pitched "an intermediary ceasefire mechanism," proposing that MONUC create -- and occupy -- buffer zones between FARDC and CNDP forces in two locations: east and south of the Rutshuru-Bunagana and Rutshuru-Rumangabo roads, and west and south of Kitchanga in the direction of Minova. Etumba cited recent fighting and said the two areas were at "catastrophic" risk of being used as corridors by CNDP for supply and reinforcement. Etumba's bottom line: "everyone should stay where they are" in order to preserve the peace.

17. (SBU) Singh's operations chief briefed Etumba at great length on the MONUC's current deployment in North Kivu, including some being made that same day. He pointed out that 21 of MONUC's 22 Mobile

Operating Bases (MOB) were deployed in the Petit Nord (southern North Kivu) to help preserve the peace. He noted MONUC could better monitor the ceasefire as armed groups and FARDC further concentrate their respective forces in areas closer to the MOBs. Privately, MONUC officials expressed concern about deploying MOBs in positions between potential belligerents.

CNDP agrees to meeting without MONUC

18. (SBU) Efforts by the other (non-MONUC) facilitators to set up a separate meeting with the CNDP political wing February 28 ran into the same complaint of "logistical problems." CNDP also cited a need to check with headquarters. They finally agreed late in the evening of February 28 to a meeting on March 1.

Comment

19. (SBU) Sow's planned visit to Nkunda and the anticipated arrivals of EU and U.S. envoys may help loosen the current CNDP grip on progress. However, concern is growing among international facilitators that the government has not taken the implementation process seriously enough. In particular, its chief representative, Etumba, does not appear to have the experience or authority to carry out the delicate negotiations needed to implement the still-fragile peace process. End comment.

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